

Hector M. Patmore, *Adam, Satan and the King of Tyre: The Interpretation of Ezekiel 28:11-19 in Late Antiquity* (Leiden: E.J. Brill). 2012. ISBN- 978-9004-20722-6. 217 pp. + indices.

Patmore's engaging contribution consists of seven chapters: 1) Introduction (pp. 1-15). 2) Rabbinic Literature (pp. 16-40). 3) Church Fathers (pp. 41-79). 4) Targum (pp. 80-132). 5) The Septuagint (pp. 133-178). 6) The Hebrew Text (pp. 179-210). And 7) Conclusion (pp. 211-218). It also contains bibliographic entries, an author index, and an index of primary sources.

In a meticulous and fascinating way, Patmore here shows the ways in which various translations steer readers in a particular direction concerning the identity of the mysterious 'person' / 'being' described in Ez 28:11-19. His basic question: 'To whom or to what is the king of Tyre being compared?' (p. 4). To answer that question, Patmore examines the sources in an exceedingly careful way. His argument 'dots all the i's and crosses all the t's'. And that argument, as he sets it forth, is

... to trace something of the history of the text's interpretation. ... In particular we will be concerned with the differing ways in which the central figure of the lament has been re-imagined, or 'refigured', in different communities and in different periods (p. 8).

To that end, Patmore first looks at the passage as it appears in Rabbinic literature. Curiously, he leaves the Hebrew text to the end of his consideration (and never really explains why- unless I missed that explanation somewhere). For Rabbinic interpreters, P. observes, the mysterious figure is Adam. Or, Hiram, as it seems that the Rabbis held differing opinions on who the text described.

The Church Fathers, Patmore shows, had a different 'reading' of the passage, identifying the figure with Satan. In proving his case Patmore explicates the chief Fathers; Tertullian, Hippolytus, Origen, Cyril of Jerusalem, John Chrysostom, Jerome, and of course Augustine.

But it is with his examination of the Targum that Patmore shines most brilliantly. His work achieves a level of specificity combined with readability seldom encountered in academic discourse. Aside from pointing out the interpretive character of the Targumim, P. also discusses their origin and textual histories.<sup>1</sup> It is self-evident that the Targumim are of central interest to our author as he spends the bulk of the chapter describing with obvious delight the textual evidence for the reading of Ezekiel 28 which he adopts. He was

... able to consult 23 manuscripts (p. 88).

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<sup>1</sup> Unfortunately the editors missed a typographical error in this section. On page 87 'by' towards the bottom of the page should be 'with'.

The fruit of that examination is presented on pages 89-100 after which, and only after which, Patmore is willing to offer his 'critically revised text'. All of which is aimed at helping us to

... discern, as far as possible, what the targumist understood the text of Ezekiel 28:11-19 to be saying (p. 101).

Then Patmore aligns his reconstructed Targum with the Hebrew text and an English translation of those texts, the Targumic expansions being indicated by italic font. It's a fantastic and utterly convincing piece of work indeed. His textual work is so very impressive and it is carefully and brilliantly demonstrated verse by verse.

And all of that leads to the conclusion that, for the Targum, the text of Ez 28 is a

... political warning that "pride goeth before destruction", to borrow the King James' Version's famous phraseology (p. 127).

Patmore's examination of the Septuagint is equally carefully done. His comparison of Vaticanus, Papyrus 967, and the MT is very finely done. As previously, he works through each verse, establishing the text and examining the variants and their significance- all in order to establish a firm reading for the passage at hand.

His conclusion? In the LXX the mysterious figure in the translator's mind is none other than the High Priest, whom the translator

... lambasts for his greed... (p. 167).

Further,

The Septuagint translator in turning the oracle against the Jerusalem High Priest may had<sup>2</sup> been directing his ire against the Hellenizing High Priest Menelaus (p. 178).

Some may quibble with that identification but given Patmore's oh so careful and so exactly propounded evidence, one would be hard pressed to show him to be wrong.

Finally, in the sixth chapter, P. leads readers through the Hebrew text, or more precisely, the Masoretic text of Codex Aleppo. He asserts that the consonantal text, the vowel points, and the accents all hold clues to the reading the editor wishes readers to adopt.

He – again – carefully exegetes the Hebrew text, comparing it all the while with the LXX and offering variations gathered from readings gleaned from other potential vocalizations of the MT.

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<sup>2</sup> - Obviously this should be 'have'. This is, as far as I have found, only the second (and final) typographical mistake in the volume.

That is, he gives readers both the MT and 'alternative readings of the consonantal text'. Amazingly, there are significant interpretative differences between the two. The only conclusion readers of the MT can reach is that the editors of that edition want us to see the text their way. And what they want us to see in this particular passage is a mysterious figure whom they identify as a Cherub.

Patmore concludes with at least two important observations:

1-

It is evident in all our sources that the overall story that the text tells plays a determinative role in the direction of the interpretation (p. 214).

2-

In all cases, however, an attempt is made to anchor the interpretation concretely in specific textual details (p. 215).

This reviewer is absolutely totally impressed with the both the argument of Patmore's volume and its explication and presentation. It is exceedingly well done and will be of interest not only to those whose primary field is exegesis, but to those who are engaged in reception history studies and text critical studies. Patmore's work is a model for future examinations of the history of the text and its various manifestations and interpretative aims. He has set the bar quite high.

Jim West  
Quartz Hill School of Theology